

WISCONSIN SNOWMOBILE SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT



2013-2014

ANNUAL REPORT



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Bureau of Law Enforcement

PUBLE203 2014

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PROGRAM SCOPE

The Bureau of Law Enforcement snowmobile program has a wide range of duties and responsibilities which include:

- Accident Investigation, Reporting and Administration
- Enforcement
- Safety Education
- Operations and Training
- Public Service Announcements
- Municipal Ordinance Review

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Accident Investigation, Reporting and Administration

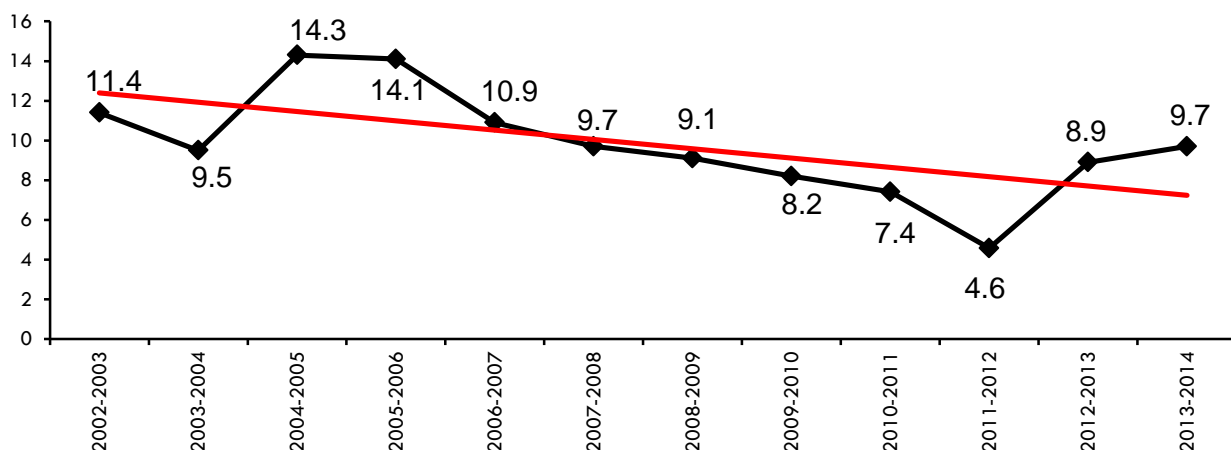
A snowmobile crash incident is any incident (regardless of the number of vehicles involved) that results in a fatality or an injury that requires medical treatment by a physician.

Wisconsin law requires every snowmobile operator involved in a crash incident to report the incident without delay to law enforcement officials. In addition, **within 10 days** of the incident, the operator must submit a written report on [Form 4100-174](#) to the Department of Natural Resources.

Over the past 10 years there has been a slight decreasing trend in the number of fatalities per 100,000 registered snowmobile (does not include snowmobile trail passes). This trend may be based on the increasing number of registered snowmobiles.

The following statistical information was compiled from data collected from the 23 fatal accident investigations during the winter of 2013-14.

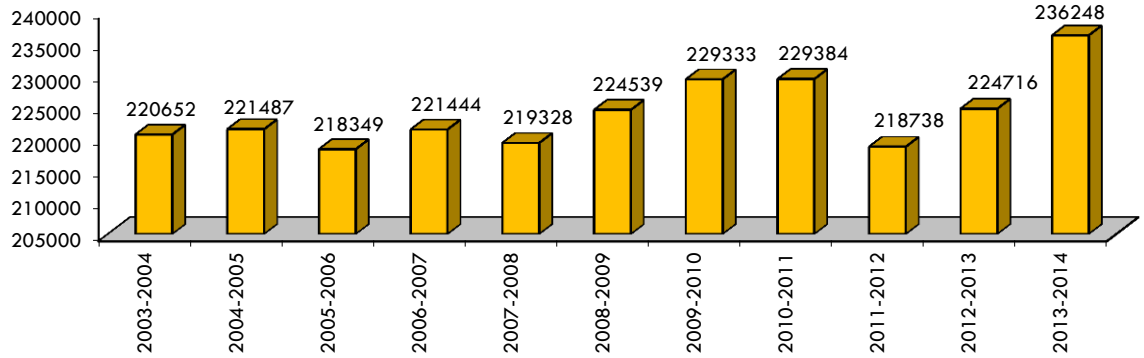
SNOWMOBILE FATALITIES PER 100,000 REGISTRATIONS



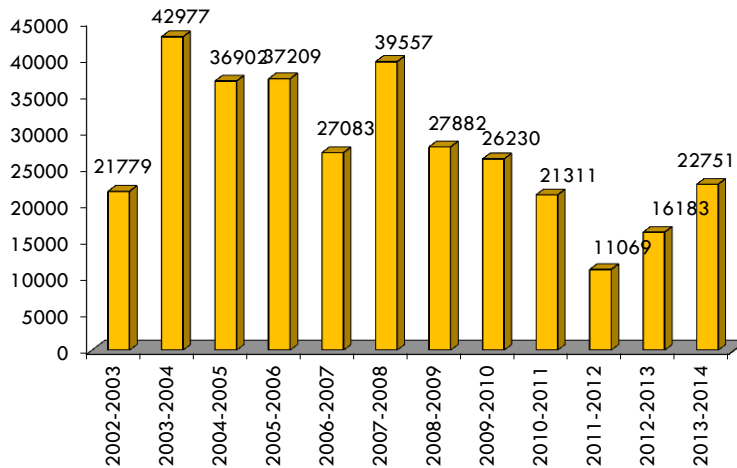
There were 236,248 registrations for the 2013/2014 season.

Registrations include public use, private use and municipal use.

WISCONSIN RESIDENT SNOWMOBILE REGISTRATIONS



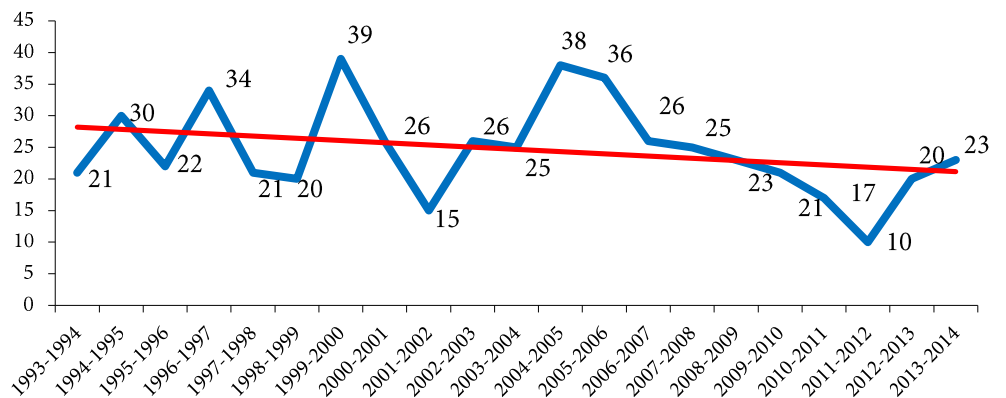
SNOWMOBILE TRAIL PASSES SOLD



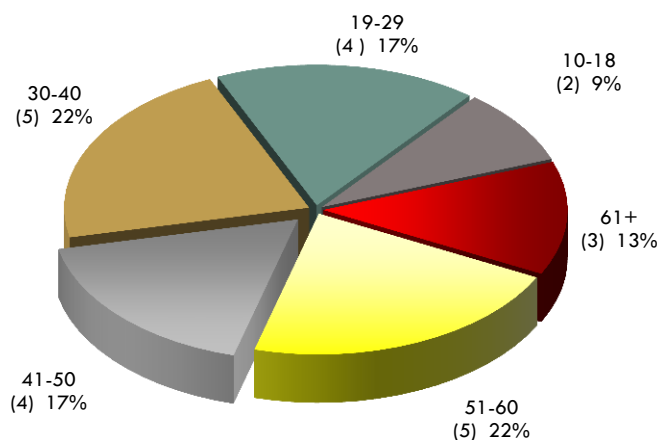
Snowmobile trail passes are required on out-of-state snowmobiles not registered in Wisconsin.

HISTORY OF SNOWMOBILE FATALITIES

Wisconsin had 23 snowmobile fatalities, 3 more than the previous year.

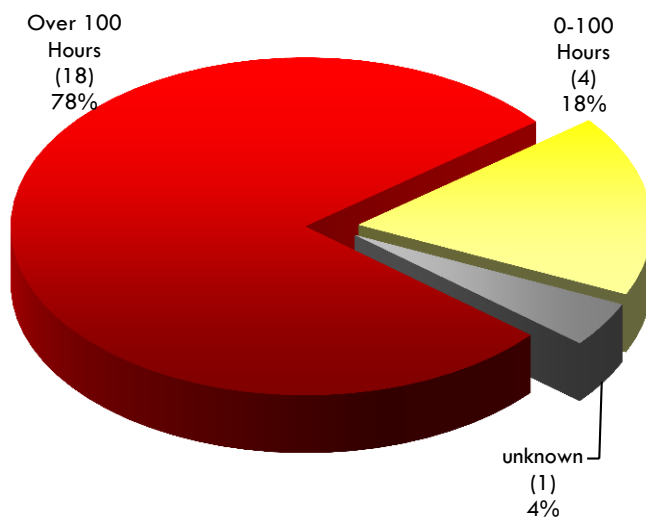


AGE OF VICTIM

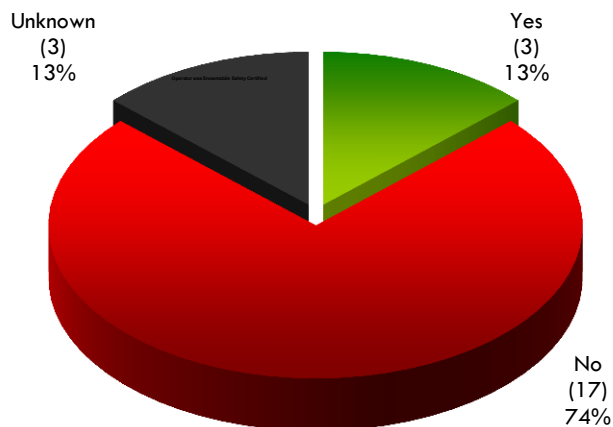


78% of the operators involved in fatal accidents reportedly had over 100 hours of experience operating a snowmobile.

OPERATOR EXPERIENCE



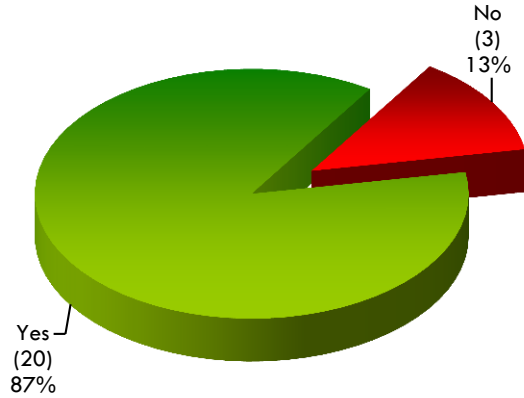
OPERATOR WAS SNOWMOBILE SAFETY CERTIFIED



One of the greatest contributing factors to snowmobile fatalities is the operator not being snowmobile safety certified. 74% of the operators involved in a fatal accident had not completed a snowmobile safety course in Wisconsin an increasing and prominent trend over the past several years.

Certification in snowmobile safety is encouraged for operators of all ages.

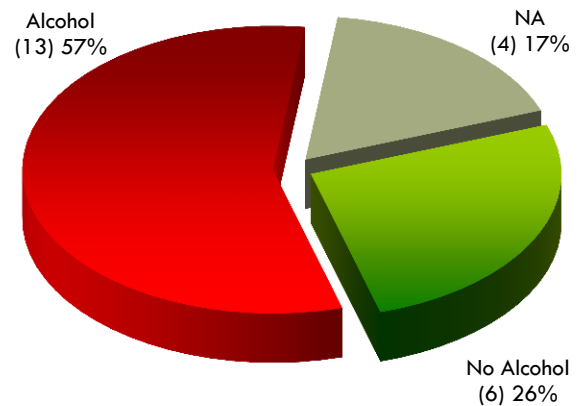
PRESENCE OF HELMET DURING ACCIDENT



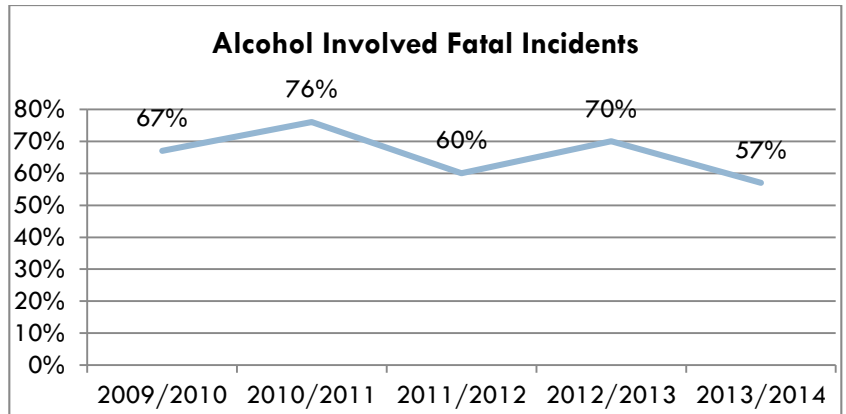
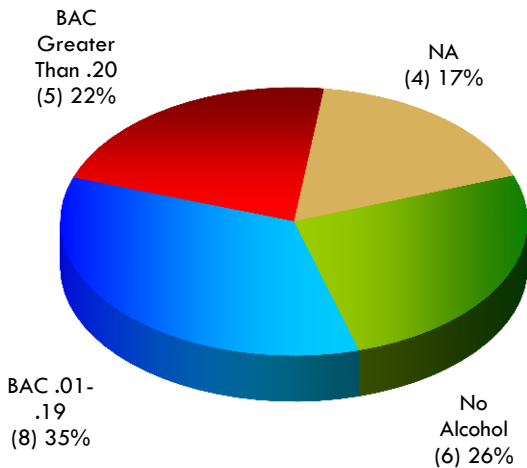
Alcohol was involved in 13 of the twenty-three fatal incidents. "Alcohol Involved" means alcohol was detected in victim's system or witness verified victim consumed alcohol. (Blood test results were unknown for nine incidents.)

Sixty-four operators were arrested for operating a snowmobile with a BAC at or above .08%.

ALCOHOL INVOLVEMENT

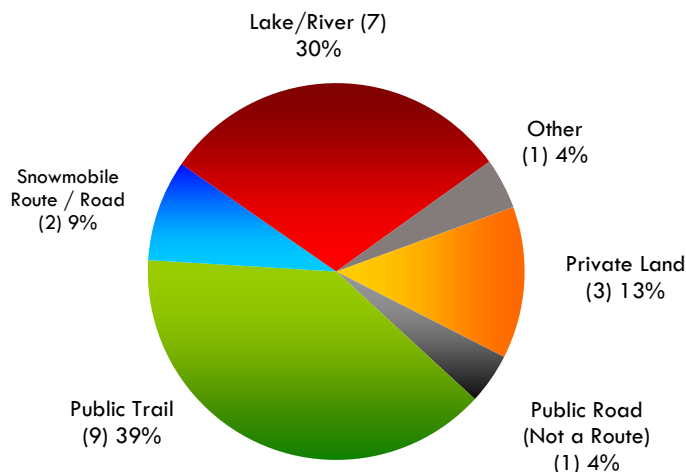


Amount of Alcohol (BAC) Detected in the Victim at the Time of the Accident



Note: Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) is in grams/milliliter (g/ml).

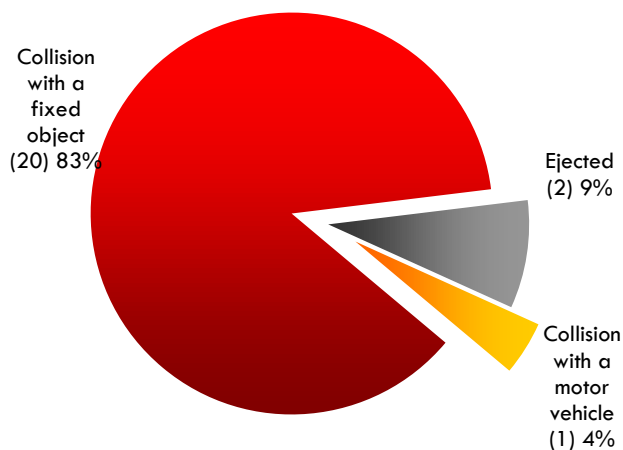
Location of Accident



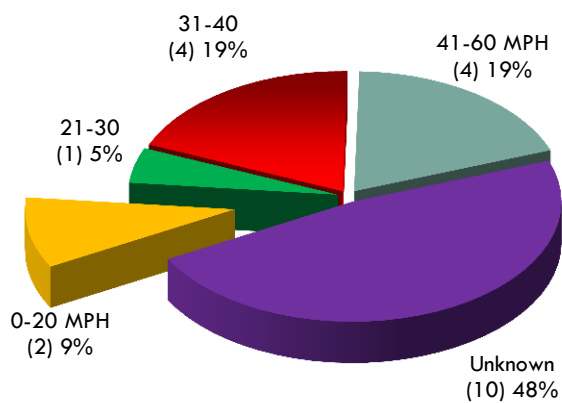
Note: A Route is a public road opened to legal snowmobile travel by the local municipality.

There were 20 fatal crashes that involved colliding with a fixed object. A “Fixed Object” could be a tree, cabin, bridge, cables or a shoreline.

Type of Accident

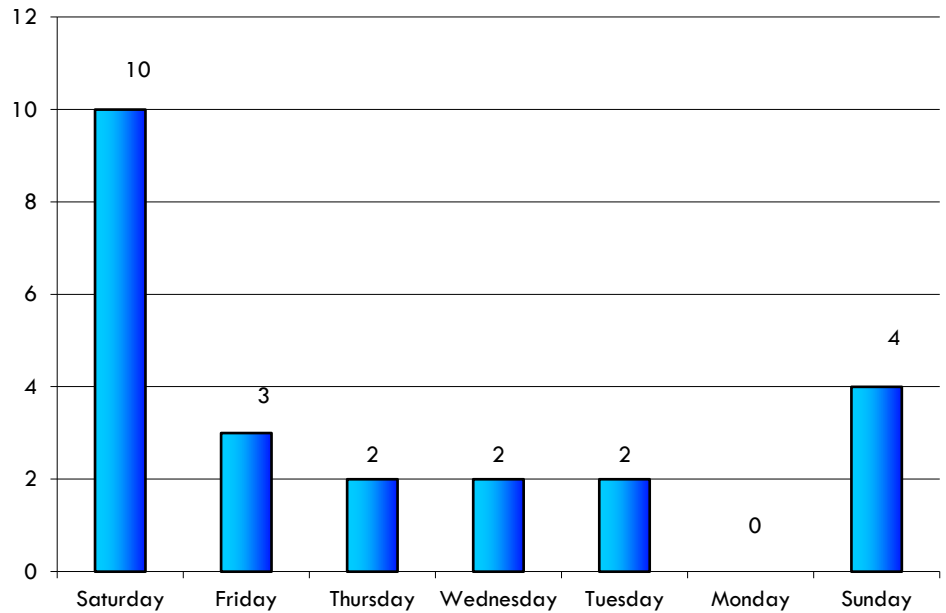


Estimated Speed at Time of Accident

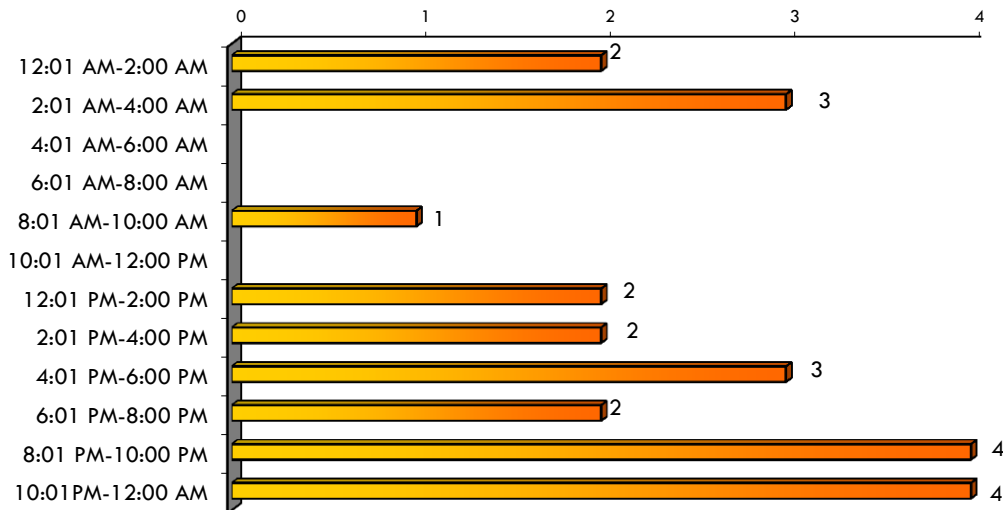


FATALITIES BY DAY OF WEEK

Saturday and Sunday continue to be the days of the week with the highest number of fatal occurrences with a total of 14 for both days.



TIME OF FATAL OCCURRENCE



Most fatal crashes occur between the hours of 8-12PM.

Enforcement

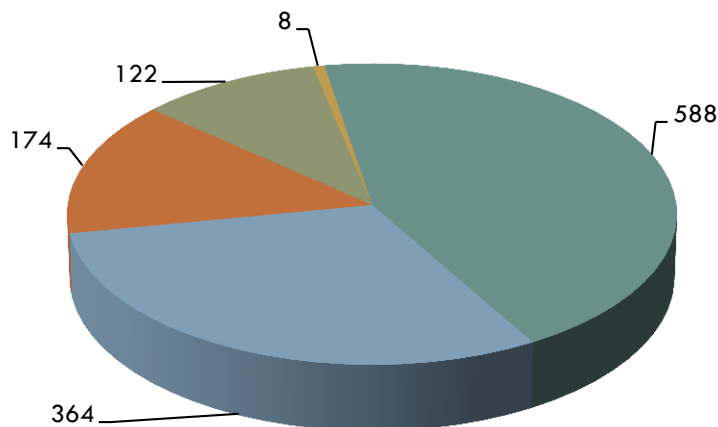
State conservation wardens and county deputies provide on-the-trail enforcement of snowmobile laws.

For the 2013/2014 season state conservation wardens and county deputies recorded 10,674 hours of snowmobile patrol and 694 hours on public relations.

Top Ten Snowmobile Violations

#1	Fail to comply with regulatory signs	227
#2	Operate snowmobile without valid registration	193
#3	Operate snowmobile without valid safety certificate or without carry proof of completion	138
#4	Operate snowmobile illegally on or in the vicinity of highways	97
#5	Operate snowmobile while under the influence of an intoxicant or controlled substance	82
#6	Operate at unreasonable, improper speed or in carless manner	82
#7	Operate snowmobile on public or private property of another without consent	65
#8	Operate snowmobile with alcohol concentration at or above 0.08%	64
#9	Operate a snowmobile on a snowmobile trail without a trail use sticker	62
#10	Fail to display or improper display of registration number or decal on snowmobile	37

Citations Issued for Snowmobile Violations for the 2013-2014



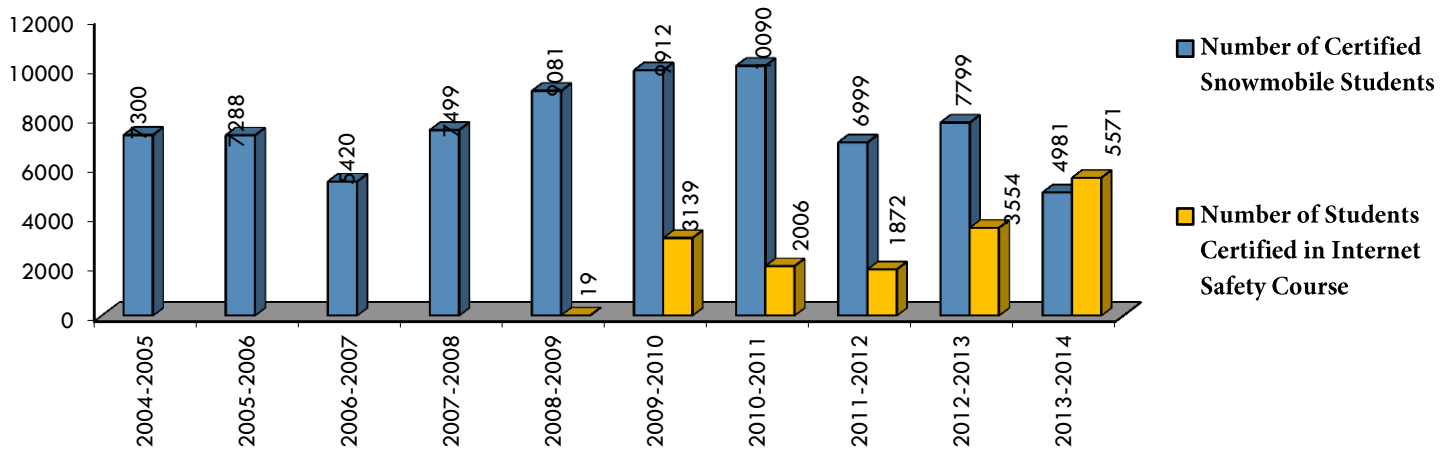
State Conservation Wardens and county deputies provide on-the-trail enforcement of snowmobile laws.

The total number of citations for the 2013-2014 season was 1,256.

- Registration / Trail Pass Violations
- Alcohol / Drug Related
- Speed Related
- Equipment Violations
- Other Violations

Safety Education

NUMBER OF STUDENTS CERTIFIED

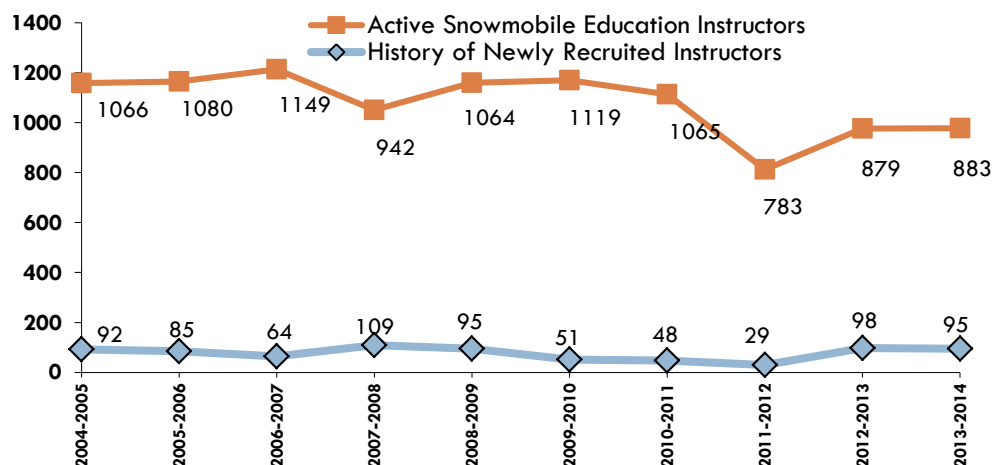


Snowmobile riding is a growing sport in Wisconsin. Along with the privilege of enjoying the sport comes the responsibility of making sure you are operating snowmobiles safely and responsibly.

Snowmobile operators at least 12 years of age who were born on or after January 1, 1985 must complete a snowmobile safety certification course in order to operate on public snowmobile trails and areas in Wisconsin. DNR recreational safety specialists recommend all snowmobile operators complete a safety course.

For the 2013/2014 Season, 5,571 of the 10,552 total students were certified through an Internet Safety Course. Students must be 16 years of age or older in order to become certified by these online classes. The trend of the number of people being certified by the internet safety course vs. a traditional class room course is increasing.

NUMBER OF INSTRUCTORS CERTIFIED AND ACTIVE



4,981 students were certified by 883 active instructors in 262 classes

Operations and Training

ATV/Snowmobile Patrol Officer Training was held in 2013 providing training to over 70 Patrol Officers. Training is mandatory for all patrols every 2 years in order for the patrol to qualify for reimbursement aids.

Public Service Announcements

The snowmobile program used radio, television and media interviews across the state. Wisconsin DNR sponsored “snowmobile safety” public service announcements working with the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association and JS Online.

2013 WISCONSIN ACT 142

2013 Wisconsin Act 142 takes effect July 1, 2015.

Provisions include:

- \$30.00 for a three-year registration
- Purchase and display of an annual trail pass required to use public trails
- A \$20.00 savings off the standard \$30.00 trail fee for members of both a local club and the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs
- Nonresident trail passes will increase from \$35.00 to \$50.00

The new fee structure will support local trail maintenance and will generate additional revenue for the state snowmobile program fund.

Municipal Ordinance Review

Counties, towns, cities and villages may enact ordinances regulating snowmobile trails and routes. If a county, town, city or village adopts an ordinance regulating snowmobile its clerk shall immediately send a copy of the ordinance to the department and to the office of any law enforcement agency of the municipality or county having jurisdiction over any highway designated as an snowmobile route.

Although Wisconsin law does not give the Department of Natural Resources advisory review authority the department will encourage and supervise a system of snowmobile routes and trails and may establish standards and procedures for certifying the designation of snowmobile routes and trails.

If significant inconsistencies with state law exist, in the interest of public safety and welfare, the county, town, city and villages the department may contact them.

Wisconsin Snowmobile Fatality Summary – 2013/2014

Date/Time	Location	Cause / Factors	Age / Sex / BAC / Residency	Helmet/WI Safety Certified
10/26/13 9:30am	Polk Co. / Town of Osceola / Parking Lot	Collision with a fixed object / Operator Inexperience, Speed	13 / F / .000 / WI	NA / Yes
Victim was operating a snowmobile fitted with a wheel kit during a safety education course. The victim accelerated and was unable to stop prior to striking a fixed object.				
12/15/13 4:20pm	Dodge Co. / Township of Elba / Frozen River	Collision with a fixed object / Alcohol, Speed, Operator Inexperience	24 / F / .070 / WI	No / Yes
The victim was traveling on a frozen river when she hit a patch of open water, lost control and struck a tree.				
12/27/13 1:02pm	Columbia Co. / Township of Randolph / Private Property	Collision with a fixed object / Snow Conditions, Inexperience	36 / M / .000 / MI	No / Yes
The victim was traveling down a field road in powdery unpacked snow and got off into deeper snow, pulling him off the field road. As he tried to correct to get back onto the road he accelerated striking an embankment and then a tree.				
12/31/13 11:28pm	Jackson Co. / Township of Manchester / Highway (not a route)	Collision with a fixed object / Inability to Control Snowmobile	68 / F / .000 / IL	No / Yes
The victim was operating along the roadway and struck a culvert which resulted in the snowmobile rolling onto the victim.				
1/1/14 2:39am	Sawyer Co. / Township of Round Lake / Lake	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol	35 / M / NA / MN	No / Yes
The victim traveled off a lake onto shore, crashing through an attached deck and into a cabin which caught fire and burned to the ground.				
1/10/14 10:00pm	Racine Co. / Town of Caledonia / Field	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol	53 / M / .251 / WI	No / No
The victim rode up an earthen berm and became airborne and entered a wooded area impacting multiple trees.				
1/11/14 3:06pm	Price Co. / Town of Worcester / Road-Route	Collision with a fixed object / Speed	70 / F / .000 / WI	No / Yes
The victim was operating down a road / route and cut the corner at a trail crossing. The victim rode into the ditch line to turn which caused the snowmobile to be sucked into deep snow. The snowmobile then tipped and accelerated; impacting two cables and eventually a tree.				

WISCONSIN SNOWMOBILE SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT REPORT

Date/Time	Location	Cause / Factors	Age / Sex / BAC / Residency	Helmet/WI Safety Certified
1/15/14 10:15pm	Polk Co. / Town of Georgetown / Lake	Ejected, Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol	20 / F / NA / WI	NA / Yes
Operator with passenger was traveling across the lake at a high rate of speed and turned sharply to avoid an ice shanty which ejected the passenger into the shanty. Operator was arrested for OWI, BAC .099.				
1/21/14 8:30pm	Adams Co. / Town of New Haven / Trail	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol	38 / M / .230 / WI	No / Yes
Victim struck a tree after he failed to follow the trail upon entering a wooded area.				
1/25/14 7:06pm	Polk Co. / Town of Amery / Lake	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, No helmet	26 / M / .214 / WI	No / No
Victim was operating on frozen river surface intending to skip open water under a bridge and struck his head on the bottom of the bridge as he passed under it.				
1/25/14 9:31PM	St Croix Co. / Stanton Township / Trail	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol	46 / M / .162 / WI	Yes / Yes
Victim failed to negotiate a corner in the trail colliding with trees.				
1/25/14 2:39am	Chippewa Co. / Howard / Trail	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol	39 / M / .186 / WI	No / Yes
Victim failed to negotiate a corner in the trail colliding with trees.				
1/30/14 1:06pm	Fond du Lac Co. / Village of New Fane / Trail	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol, Drugs	47 / M / .073 / WI	No / Yes
Victim failed to negotiate a corner in the trail and hit a small embankment on the side of the trail at which point the snowmobile and operator both collided with a tree.				
2/1/14 1:52am	Florence Co. / Tipler / Road-Route	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol	48 / M / .130 / WI	No / Yes
Victim failed to negotiate a slight curve on the route and continued straight off the route and collided with a tree.				
2/1/14 2:20am	Iron Co. / Mercer / Trail	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol	46 / M / .270 / IL	No / Yes
Victim dropped the right ski off the trail losing control and striking trees.				

WISCONSIN SNOWMOBILE SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT REPORT

Date/Time	Location	Cause / Factors	Age / Sex / BAC / Residency	Helmet/WI Safety Certified
2/22/14 8:00pm	Walworth Co. / Township of Delavan / Lake	Collision with a fixed object, Ejected / Speed, Alcohol	51 / M / .226 / WI	No / Yes
Victim collided with a peninsula shoreline containing cattails and was ejected.				
2/23/14 4:06pm	Winnebago Co. / Clayton Township / Trail	Collision with a vehicle / Failing to obey posted trail markers/signs, Speed	62 / M / .000 / WI	No / Yes
Victim failed to stop at a posted stop sign on the trail and was struck by a vehicle.				
3/6/14 8:36pm	Vernon Co. / Stark Township / Trail	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol	31 / M / .050 / WI	No / Yes
Victim was traveling at a high rate of speed and struck a tree.				
3/10:03pm	Chippewa Co. / Wheaton Township / Trail	Collision with a fixed object / Speed	20 / M / .000 / WI	Yes / Yes
Victim was traveling at a high rate of speed and struck a tree.				
3/8/14 3:30pm	Juneau Co. / Township of Lemonweir / Private Property-Field	Collision with a fixed object / Misjudged Distance	13 / M / NA / WI	NA / No
Victim was being towed behind a snowmobile on an inner tube with a 60' rope in a large open field when he struck a tree in a tree line.				
3/8/14 10:30pm	Sawyer Co. / Town of Spider Lake / Lake	Ejected / Speed, Alcohol	56 / M / .140 / WI	Yes / Yes
Victim was operating at a high rate of speed when he went airborne, lost control and crashed onto the ice surface.				
3/9/14 5:10pm	Bayfield Co. / Town of Namakagen / Trail	Collision with a fixed object / Speed, Alcohol	51 / M / .162 / IA	No / Yes
Victim was operating on a straight stretch of trail leading to a curve and appeared to lose control prior to entering the curve and struck a tree.				
3/16/14 2:00am	Adams Co. / Town of Castle Rock / Lake	Ejected / Speed, Alcohol	57 / M / NA / IL	No / Yes
Victim was operating on frozen lake when he lost control of the snowmobile and was ejected.				

2013-2014 TOTAL SNOWMOBILE INJURY INCIDENTS REPORTED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT BY COUNTY

Total Incidents = 181

Unknown County accounts for 1 of the total incidents.

A report must be filed for any crash that results in an injury requiring treatment by a physician or a fatal incident must be reported as soon as possible to a Conservation Warden or other law enforcement officer. You must file a written report of the incident within 10 days to the DNR

